

progressive legislation and actually achieve results. I sincerely wish that this arrangement will work so that the people of Russia benefit from progressive changes that will improve living standards that make for a better society.

In my opinion, Ukraine has chosen the right path. In parliament, we formed a majority bloc by uniting the "healthy" forces who were committed to reform legislation. This is necessary to ensure speedy action on a range of progressive proposals to deal with the problems of our pension system, taxes, and the criminal and civil code. This will help us to clean house in the Rada and institute badly needed changes that, in the past, impeded our efforts to confront these needs.

Is compromise possible? Let's think about it. We want our people to live in a new environment but there are some who want to pull us back to the old Soviet system. To go back is to lose hope and confidence in our ability to improve our situation. The reformers want a government that will enable people to own property while the Communists want people to be the property of the state. We believe that the Constitution is the basic law, but they still believe the "Party" is the supreme authority.

Finally, in a democracy it is acceptable to have a compromise, which is how people work out their differences. But the old guard distrusts working with what they see as the "bourgeois" and reject efforts to resolve differences amicably. So we are not talking about compromise in terms of confronting the issues and resolving differences, but the Communists see any negotiations with reformers as selling out or imposing a kompromat on us. I am reminded of the words of the great Golda Meir, who was born in Kiev, who once said: "We want to live. Our neighbors want to see us dead. I am afraid that this does not leave any space for compromise".

The problem would not be so serious if we were talking only about Parliament. However, we are talking about society as a whole. The Leftists seem committed to destroying the Rada, the one institution that ensures representation of the people in government decision-making. Perhaps they do not know about Abraham Lincoln's statement that a house divided cannot succeed and that their intransigence will prevent democracy from taking root in Ukraine. Everyone knows what happens to the person if his right leg makes two steps forward and the left remains rooted in the same spot.

I want to stress again that after the 1999 presidential election, it became obvious that a divided parliament with a Communist as Speaker would prove unacceptable and only serve to obstruct the reform agenda of the government. Had the Communists prevailed, they would have taken the country down the back road of political fatalism. Yet there are some who worry that the unfairness of winners hides the guilt of losers. I can only say that if the Leftists had won the election, we would not be asking these questions.

I am afraid that if the majority had allowed a Communist to remain as Speaker, it would have proved to be a temporary solution, similar to what will happen with the Duma. In the United States, it is possible for the Republicans to control the Congress and the other party to have the Presidency. This is possible because America has 200 years of experience working within a democratic system.

Our country does not have time to wait. For us, every day without enacting and implementing laws is a huge setback for a country that must accomplish so much in a critically short time. The majority knows that it is impossible to form a parliament without the opposition, and it is our inten-

tion to treat proposals from the opposition seriously. We have assumed political responsibility that gives us an opportunity to cooperate with the newly re-elected president who bears the main responsibility for society as a whole.

We recognize that it is the president who must provide the leadership and direct the institutions of government. Throughout the years of Ukraine's independence, there is not a single case when the three branches of power simultaneously worked together on behalf of Ukrainian citizens. Today we must take responsibility and are ready to be accountable for our actions.

Once again, we do not have time. The majority of Ukrainian citizens spoke very clearly in the recent election by giving President Kuchma a new four-year term. By this vote, they rejected the Communist Party and the idea of turning back to the old system where freedom and human rights did not exist.

The Communists, of course, feel threatened by the new democratic forces and their reform agenda. They do not want to relinquish power and recognize that a new generation of intelligent and resourceful leaders is taking charge. That is the promise of democracy and, if given a chance to succeed, the future of Ukraine in the new millennium.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2000

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, due to necessary medical treatment, I was not present for the following votes. If I had been present, I would have voted as follows:

April 3, 2000:

Rollcall vote 96, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1089, the Mutual Fund Tax Awareness Act, I would have voted "yea."

Rollcall vote 97, on the motion to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 3591, providing the gold medal to former President Ronald Reagan and his wife Nancy Reagan, I would have voted "yea."

April 4, 2000:

Rollcall vote 98, on agreeing to the LaHood amendment to H.R. 2418, I would have voted "nay."

Rollcall vote 99, on agreeing to the DeGette amendment to H.R. 2418, I would have voted "yea."

Rollcall vote 100, on agreeing to the Luther amendment to H.R. 2418, I would have voted "nay."

Rollcall vote 101, on passage of H.R. 2418, the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network Amendments, I would have voted "yea."

THE TWO-HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF EASTON, MASSACHUSETTS

HON. JOHN JOSEPH MOAKLEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 5, 2000

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate the beginning of a New Millennium, we are reminded of the history and accomplish-

ments of our forebears in past centuries who "brought forth" as President Lincoln said, "on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." This year, 2000, also marks the Two-hundred and Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the Founding of Easton, Massachusetts, which shares a unique role in the Colonial and Civil War history of this great country. I acknowledge the monumental spirit of the citizens of Easton, and to recognize their many contributions to the growth and development of the United States, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

THE CONFEDERATE FLAG

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 6, 2000

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, there are a million reasons why the Confederate Flag should not be flying over any state capitol, comprise a part of any state flag, or be displayed in any place of honor or distinction. From its racist past to its polemic present, the one thing that can be stated unequivocally, is that today, the flag has become shrouded in an over-simplified, revisionist version of American history."

"Claims that the flag represents a benign segment of Southern history, ruled by some sort of genteel charm and virtuous code of conduct, are patently offensive to every American whose ancestors were brutalized by the stinging pains of slavery or ostracized by its illegitimate progeny, Jim Crow."

"This legislation is intended to set the record straight. The Leaders of the Confederate States of America were traitors. Had they been allowed to succeed in their ultimate act of betrayal, they would have destroyed all of the principles and freedoms we hold dear as Americans. It is impossible to celebrate the Confederate Flag and simultaneously profess one's love of democracy. It is self-delusional to attribute equality, freedom and opportunity to the Confederacy when its treasonous acts would have destroyed all of these values—these American values."

"As our nation tries to deal with rise in conspicuous acts of racial violence and hate, the one glaring fact with which we are frequently confronted is that we have not adequately and honestly dealt with our past. Once again, this resolution will be a constructive first step in starting that dialogue. I challenge one person who presently supports the flying of the Confederate flag to read the words contained in this legislation and say that the beliefs of the Confederacy, articulated in this bill, do not stand direct conflict with the principles we enjoy as one nation united and indivisible under God."

"At the end of the day, this bill is about the true history of the flag flying over the Capitol building in South Carolina. It clarifies the symbolism connected with the battle flag contained in the Mississippi and Georgia state flags. At the end of the day, this legislation begs the question, 'Will we, as Americans, united and God-fearing, allow ourselves to posthumously give the Confederacy the divided nation they so desperately fought to create, or will we embrace the fundamental principles which presently govern the moral conscience of our nation and work toward a day